

IN THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application. An identifier indicating the status of each claim is provided.

Listing of Claims

1. (Currently Amended) An information playback apparatus for playing back a recording medium on which image information is recorded, comprising:

first fetching means for fetching identification information, input by a user, used for identification of a recording medium;

second fetching means for fetching a permission condition, input by the user, for permitting playback of the image information recorded on a recording medium;

storage means for storing the identification information fetched by said first fetching means and the permission condition fetched by said second fetching means;

extraction means for extracting the identification information recorded on a recording medium loaded in said information playback apparatus;

first comparison means for comparing the identification information extracted by said extraction means and the identification information stored in said storage means with each other;

third fetching means for fetching a permission condition when the identification information extracted by said extraction means and the identification information stored in said storage means coincide with each other;

second comparison means for comparing the permission condition fetched by said third fetching means and the permission condition stored in said storage means with each other;
and

control means for controlling playback of the image information recorded on the recording medium in response to a result of the comparison by said second comparison means,

wherein said user is able to increase a value of said identification information, input by a user, used for identification of a recording medium and a value of said identification information recorded on a recording medium loaded in said information playback apparatus,

wherein the increased values of the identification information are written over the original values of the identification information in the storage means, and

wherein, if a maximum of identification information is achieved, ~~new~~
~~identification information is written over an oldest identification information or the new~~
identification information is written over a user-selected replaceable identification information.

2. (Original) An information playback apparatus according to claim 1,
wherein the permission condition includes a password.

3. (Original) An information playback apparatus according to claim 1,
wherein the permission condition includes a parental level.

4. (Currently Amended) An information playback method for an information playback apparatus which plays back a recording medium on which image information is recorded, comprising:

a first fetching step of fetching identification information, input by a user, used for identification of a recording medium;

a second fetching step of fetching a permission condition, input by the user, for

permitting playback of the image information recorded on a recording medium;

a storage control step of controlling storage of the identification information fetched by the processing in the first fetching step and the permission condition fetched by the processing in the second fetching step;

an extraction step of extracting the identification information recorded on a recording medium loaded in said information playback apparatus;

a first comparison step of comparing the identification information extracted by the processing in the extraction step and the identification information whose storage has been controlled by the processing in the storage control step with each other;

a third fetching step of fetching a permission condition when the identification information extracted by the processing in the extraction step and the identification information whose storage has been controlled by the processing in the storage control step coincide with each other;

a second comparison step of comparing the permission condition fetched by the processing in the third fetching step and the permission condition whose storage has been controlled by the processing in the storage control step with each other; and

a control step of controlling playback of the image information recorded on the recording medium in response to a result of the comparison by the processing in the second comparison step,

wherein said user is able to increase a value of said identification information, input by a user, used for identification of a recording medium and a value of said identification information recorded on a recording medium loaded in said information playback apparatus,

wherein the increased values of the identification information are written over the

original values of the identification information in the storage control step, and

wherein, if a maximum of identification information is achieved, new
~~identification information is written over oldest identification information or the new~~
identification information is written over a user-selected replaceable identification information.

5. (Currently Amended) A recording medium on which a computer-readable program for information playback for an information playback apparatus which plays back an information recording medium on which image information is recorded is recorded, the program comprising:

a first fetching step of fetching identification information, input by a user, used for identification of an information recording medium;

a second fetching step of fetching a permission condition, input by the user, for permitting playback of the image information recorded on an information recording medium;

a storage control step of controlling storage of the identification information fetched by the processing in the first fetching step and the permission condition fetched by the processing in the second fetching step;

an extraction step of extracting the identification information recorded on an information recording medium loaded in said information playback apparatus;

a first comparison step of comparing the identification information extracted by the processing in the extraction step and the identification information whose storage has been controlled by the processing in the storage control step with each other;

a third fetching step of fetching a permission condition when the identification information extracted by the processing in the extraction step and the identification information

whose storage has been controlled by the processing in the storage control step coincide with each other;

a second comparison step of comparing the permission condition fetched by the processing in the third fetching step and the permission condition whose storage has been controlled by the processing in the storage control step with each other; and

a control step of controlling playback of the image information recorded on the information recording medium in response to a result of the comparison by the processing in the second comparison step,

wherein said user is able to increase a value of said identification information, input by a user, used for identification of a recording medium and a value of said identification information recorded on an information recording medium loaded in said information playback apparatus,

wherein the increased values of the identification information are written over the original values of the identification information in the storage control step, and

wherein, if a maximum of identification information is achieved, new identification information is written over an oldest identification information or the new identification information is written over a user-selected replaceable identification information.

6. (Currently Amended) An information playback apparatus for playing back a recording medium on which image information is recorded, comprising:

first fetching means for fetching from a store in said playback apparatus user-programmable viewing permission information, input by a user, for controlling playback from said recording medium;

second fetching means for fetching a permission condition, input by a user, for permitting playback of the image information recorded on said recording medium;

storage means for storing the viewing permission information and the permission condition;

comparison means for comparing the viewing permission information and the permission condition with each other; and

control means for controlling playback of the image information recorded on the recording medium as a function of the comparison means,

wherein said user is able to increase a value of said user-programmable viewing permission information, input by a user, for controlling playback from said recording medium and a value of said permission condition, input by a user, for permitting playback of the image information recorded on said recording medium,

wherein the increased values of the user-programmable viewing permission information and the permission condition are written over the original values of ~~the user-selected~~ user-programmable viewing permission information and the permission condition in the storage means.

7. (Previously Presented) The information playback apparatus according to claim 6, wherein the permission condition derived from said recording medium is afforded a higher weighting than the viewing permission information.

8. (Currently Amended) A method for controlling playback of a recording medium comprising:

establishing a permission condition associated with a playback device, as a function of first input by a user;

storing the permission condition;

establishing a recording medium identification for each of one or more recording media, as a function of second input by the user;

storing the recording medium identification for each of the one or more recording media; and

comparing the stored permission condition and the stored recording medium identification for a particular recording medium,

wherein when the permission condition satisfies a predetermined relationship with the recording medium identification, a valid password, input by a user, is required to initiate playback of the particular recording medium,

wherein said user is able to increase a value of said permission condition associated with said playback device and a value of said recording medium identification for each of said one or more recording media,

wherein the increased value of said permission condition is written over the original value of the permission condition in storage, and

wherein, if a maximum of the recording medium identification information is achieved, ~~new recording medium identification information is written over an oldest recording medium identification information or the new recording medium identification information is~~ written over a user-selected replaceable recording medium identification information.

9. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 8, wherein the

permission condition includes a password.

10. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 8, wherein the permission condition includes a parental level.

11. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 8, further comprising:

determining an eject condition; and

requiring the user to provide the valid password to initiate playback of the particular recording medium following the eject condition.

12. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 8, further comprising storing a parental level and password for each of the one or more recording media.

13. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for controlling playback of a recording medium comprising:

means for establishing a permission condition associated with a playback device, as a function of first input by a user;

means for storing the permission condition;

means for establishing a recording medium identification for each of one or more recording media, as a function of second input by the user;

means for storing the recording medium identification for each of the one or more recording media;

means for comparing the stored permission condition and the stored recording medium identification for a particular recording medium; and

means for controlling the playback of the particular recording medium wherein when the permission condition satisfies a predetermined relationship with the recording medium identification, a valid password, input by a user, is required to initiate playback of the particular recording medium,

wherein said user is able to increase a value of said permission condition associated with said playback device and a value of said recording medium identification for each of said one or more recording media,

wherein the increased value of said permission condition is written over the original value of the permission condition in the means for storage, and

wherein, if a maximum of the recording medium identification is achieved, ~~new recording medium identification is written over an oldest recording medium identification or the~~ new recording medium identification is written over a user-selected replaceable recording medium identification.

14. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 13, wherein the permission condition includes a password.

15. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 13, wherein the permission condition includes a parental level.

16. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 13, further

comprising:

means for determining an eject condition,

wherein the means for controlling require the valid password to initiate playback of the particular recording medium following the eject condition.

17. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 13, further comprising means for storing a parental level and password for each of the one or more recording media.